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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

THURSDAY, December 21, 1939

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "GOOSE AND DUCK." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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NOTE: This Chat replaces the "Protein in the Diet" information previously sent to you. Hold "Protein in the Diet" for use on January 5, 1940.

Around Thanksgiving time, I gave you some news about turkeys. Today I have some more suggestions about holiday birds--but this time they're on goose and duck. First of all, I have some pointers on the selection of a goose or duck.

You know the holiday bird is really the main attraction for the dinner, so select one that will be tender and juicy when served. When you go to the market you will look for a plump bird with a full breast--and a good covering of fat. But remember that a goose or duck may sometimes be too fat, and then you will lose much of the weight in the grease that cooks out.

Of course, only the young birds are tender enough for roasting. And the best way to tell the age of a goose or duck is to feel the windpipe, which runs up the front of the neck. If the windpipe is soft and pliable, you can be pretty sure that the bird is young.

Now when it comes to deciding how big a bird to get--most folks figure that they need about a pound and a half for each person served at the table. That is, for goose or duck--a pound and a half per person.

Young geese range all the way from eight to sixteen pounds. So you can plan to serve one of them to a fairly large group. But ducks usually come to the market weighing five or six pounds, and are only big enough to serve three or four persons.



By the way, have you noticed that many of the young ducks on the market now are called Long Island ducklings? That's a name used in the trade to identify them as fast-grown ducks. In fact, they are usually ready for the table in only about twelve weeks. You can tell a Long Island duckling by its very white skin and its bright yellow legs and beak.

If the duck or goose is to make a good appearance at the table, you will need to use care in drawing it and preparing it for the oven. If the bird comes to you picked, the first step is to pull out the pin feathers and the "down". Then quickly singe off the hairs. Then cut off the head, feet, and oil sac at the top of the tail.

Next comes the drawing of the bird, and I'm going to read something from a release of the Federal Bureau of Home Economics about that.....

"First make a cut in the skin at the back of the neck and carefully remove the crop. Then pull the skin down and cut the neck off short. Of course, you will save this neck for making stock to be used in the rich giblet gravy. Finish drawing the bird from a lengthwise cut that is made under the tail. Finally wash the bird thoroughly -- both inside and outside--with cold water and dry carefully.

"Making the stuffing is the next step. And a good-tasting stuffing is almost as important as the bird itself. Rice--either the cultivated or wild rice--is always a favorite for stuffing duck or goose. But you can also use crumbs from bread that is two or three days old.

"Because the duck and goose are fat birds, you won't need to add much fat to the stuffing. But you will add celery, parsley, or onion as seasoning vegetables--besides the usual herb seasonings. Or for a different flavor you may want to put in some dried apricots, prunes, raisins, or tart apple cubes candied with sugar.



"Fill both the neck and body cavities with stuffing, but do not pack.

(That's because stuffing, especially rice stuffing, swells so much inside the bird.) Then draw the skin of the neck to the back of the bird and fasten it neatly with string or skewers. Next, sew up the opening under the tail and tie the legs close to the body. Also fasten the wings with a string, but be sure to cross it at the back where the marks will not show."

As for roasting the bird--the oven temperature and the length of time are the two important items. Here are the directions, which the Bureau of Home Economics has worked out.....

"Start roasting the bird with the breast down on the rack of a shallow pan. Of course, you won't use water in the pan and you won't cover it. Roast a five to six pound young duck at 350 degrees F. for two to two-and-one-half hours--or until the breast and thigh are tender when pierced with a skewer. Roast a ten to twelve pound young goose at 325 degrees F. for three to four hours--or until tender.

"You will find that a duck or goose is so fat that it needs no basting, but turn it every half hour to get all parts cooked evenly. If the bird is very fat, prick the skin during the roasting to allow the fat to drain out.

"For the carving, there's a simple trick in slicing the breast that makes the job so much easier. First remove the leg and wing on the side nearest to you--just as from any bird. Then make deep cuts on the breast through the skin and flesh and right down to the bone. These cuts are about two inches apart. Start them at the ridge in the middle of the breast and have them go down the side at right angles to the ridge. When you lift out the thick sections of breast meat, each piece will have a layer of browned skin and rich fat on top. Repeat the carving process on the other side of the bird."

So ends the story of the duck or goose dinner.

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